

REMARKS

Claim 1 has been amended to recite that the solvent is removed from the solution by evaporation and that, thereafter, the double bonds are broken in the substantial absence of the evaporated solvent. This is a further clarification of the meaning of Claim 22 which has been cancelled. This is inherent from the term "evaporation" as set forth in that claim. It is described as the preferred embodiment in paragraph 9 of the present specification and is further supported by Example 1.

The common meaning of the term "evaporation" means that the liquid evaporated, solvent in this case, is converted to a gaseous state and stays in that state. The term "evaporation" is contrasted with the term "reflux" which means that the liquid, e.g. solvent, is boiled and a part of the liquid is temporarily converted to the gaseous state but is condensed back to the liquid state. It allows the liquid to be heated to boiling without evaporative loss so that the liquid stays in place. The terms "evaporation" and "reflux" are clearly distinguishable to a person of ordinary skill as illustrated in Example 1 of the present application.

Afeyan discloses at col. 7, lines 30-37, that the free radical reaction takes place in the aqueous solvent at reflux. This is consistent with "reflux" but not "evaporation" which would remove the aqueous solvent prior to the free radical reaction. To further clarify this difference from Afeyan, Claim 1 has been amended to recite that evaporation to remove the solvent from solution occurs prior to covalent bonding and cross-linking and that these reactions take place in the substantial absence of the evaporated solvent. This clearly distinguishes Afeyan which refluxes and performs the reactions in the presence of solvent.

Applicants respectfully submit that the claims are in condition for allowance and an early notification of such is solicited.

Please direct any calls in connection with this application to the undersigned at
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Respectfully submitted,
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